

In the Claims

1.-46. (Cancelled)

47. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting formation and development of a microorganism biofilm on a surface in a liquid medium comprising:

a) introducing into said medium at least one particle that is charged electrically, magnetic or magnetizable or covered with at least one magnetic or magnetizable layer,

b) keeping the medium in conditions that permit development of a biofilm by said microorganism on said surface, said at least one particle resting on said surface, and

c) detecting formation of a biofilm on said surface by application of an electric, magnetic or electromagnetic field to set into motion said at least one particle, the formation of a biofilm being detected when the ~~motions~~ motion of said at least one ~~particle~~ particle on said surface ~~are~~ is slowed down or prevented due to formation of the biofilm.

48. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 47, wherein step c) comprises subjecting said at least one particle to an electric, magnetic or electromagnetic field that is ~~may be~~ applied by impulsion.

49. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 47, wherein step c) comprises subjecting said at least one particle to a progressive augmentation of an electric, magnetic or electromagnetic field.

50. (Cancelled)

51. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein said medium flows in a constant stream through an open reactor.

52. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein the medium flows at a discontinuous stream through an open reactor at given time intervals.

53. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein in step c) the at least one particle is lighted with a light source and motion of the lighted particle is detected.

54. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein the at least one particle generates a signal.

55. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein the at least one particle is fluorescent, phosphorescent, radioactive or chemo-luminescent.

56. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47,

wherein several particles are introduced into the medium in step a), and

wherein formation of a biofilm on said surface is detected in step c) by applying an electric, magnetic or electromagnetic field to set into motion said particles, formation of a biofilm being detected when the particles cannot be brought together on said surface by the electric, magnetic or electromagnetic field.

57. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein when particles can be grouped together and detection of the grouping is visual.

58. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein said medium is homogeneous or non-homogeneous.